(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) Procurement of rice has been 232.7 lakh tonnes in Kharif Marketing Season 2004-05 (upto 22.7.2005) compared to 220.2 lakh tonnes in the corresponding period last year. Thus, there has been no shortfall in procurement of rice by Government agencies in the current year. However, in respect of wheat, there has been a shortfall of approximately 20 lakh tonnes. Procurement of wheat in Rabi Marketing Season 2005-06 has been 147.9 lakh tonnes compared to 167.9 lakh tonnes last year. Increased participation by private trade may be one of the reasons for lower procurement of wheat by the Government agencies this year.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Promoting organic farming

489. SHRI R.S. GAVAI:

SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India is lagging behind in expanding organic farming despite being placed in an advantageous position;

(b) whether it is also a fact that despite allocating considerable funds for National Programme for Organic Production in the current plan, the organic sector lags far behind its actual potential;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps the Government propose to take to promote organic farming in the country and also to achieve the targets set out in the plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) There is no specific allocation of funds under National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) under Ministry of Commerce.

However, National Project of Organic Farming (NPOF) sanctioned w.e.f. 1.10.2004 has project outlay of Rs. 57.05 crores for 10th Plan Period. During 2004-05, there was an expenditure of Rs. 4.50 crores and has an outlay of Rs. 27.00 crores for 2005-06.

(d) Under the National Project on Organic Farming, financial assistance is being provided *inter-alia* for capacity building through appointment of service providers, setting up of commercial production units of various organic input like fruits and vegetable waste compost, biofertilizer, vermiculture hatcherie etc., organizing training on certification/ inspection and input production technology, field demonstrations on organic inputs including biogas slurry, setting up of model organic farms, promotion, extention and market development of organic produce.

To increase the export of organic products, Ministry of Commerce, under National Project of Organic Production has developed National Standards for Organic Products and accreditation/certification system for appointing inspection and certification agencies, established equivalency with European Union (EU)/International Federation for Organic Movement (IFOAM) apart from organizing awareness programmes, training programmes and data management.

Research on pest resistance of Bt. Cotton

490. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether, according to a study by Central Institute for Cotton Research (CICR), a few years down the line, Bt. cotton might die a natural death at the hands of American bollworm, the pest it is supposed to resist;

(b) whether it is a fact that the CICR has developed a model that predicts exactly how many years it would take the notorious pest to become completely resistant to Bt. cotton; and

(c) if so, the steps Government propose to take to arrest its impending decline?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) The study conducted by Central Institute for Cotton Research (CICR) showed that the American bollworm will develop resistance to Bt-cotton after a few years depending mainly